February 1, 1876.

G. R. Waterhouse, Esq., V.P., in the Chair.

The Secretary read the following extract from a Report by Commander Cookson, R.N., of a visit by H.M.S. "Peterel" to the Galapagos Islands in July 1875, which had been communicated to him by the First Lord of the Admiralty:—

"A notice of these islands would be incomplete without some reference to the Tortoises for which they are so famous, and from whom they derive their name.

"These animals are extinct in Charles Island; and only a very few individuals are supposed to survive on Chatham Island. In Hood, James, and Indefatigable Islands the numbers are so reduced that they are no longer hunted, the few left being in the most inaccessible parts of the islands; and I was assured that a search of a fortnight might not result in finding a single individual on either of these islands. Albemarle and Abingdon are the only remaining islands in which they have ever been found. In parts of Albemarle Island they are still very abundant, especially at the south-east end.

"They are still tolerably numerous near Tagus Cove. Landing a party of twenty-four men about half a mile south-east of Tagus Cove, we found in a few hours thirty tortoises: the three largest weighed respectively 241 lb., 185 lb., and 173 lb.; these, I was told, were as large as they are commonly found now.

"Tagus Cove is a favourite resort of whalers for the purpose of getting Tortoises. The anchorage is perfectly secure; and the custom is for almost the entire crew to be landed until as many Tortoises are secured as can conveniently be taken on board, some whalers going to sea with as many as 100.

"We found a good trail leading from the landing-place (at one of the gullies before mentioned as having pools of fresh water at its mouth) to the ground where the Tortoises are found, a distance of about three miles; quantities of Tortoise shells, and traces of fires showed the numerous camping-grounds.

"Tortoises were never, I believe, very abundant on Abingdon Island; our searching party found four on this island. They were on the high ground; and it was a work of great labour getting them down to the boats. The distance was about four miles; but the ground was exceedingly rugged, and covered with thick brush, through which a trail had to be cut for the entire distance. The largest found on this island weighed 201 lb., and the smallest 135 lb.

"In consequence of the extent of Albemarle Island, and the inaccessibility of many parts of it, I have no doubt these animals are still very numerous on it, and are likely to be so for a long period even at the present rate at which they are destroyed; but I have already shown the havoc made amongst them by the oil-makers. This is the cause of their being nearly extinct on James and Indefatigable

Islands, where they used to be so numerous. Admiral Fitzroy found a party on James Island making oil in 1835.

"In Abingdon Island, where they are not numerous, I believe they are doomed to destruction directly the orchilla-pickers are placed on the island; for a party of sixty or eighty men will soon hunt over this small island, and discover every individual on it. The meat is highly esteemed by the inhabitants; we found it rather tough and stringy; but it makes excellent soup.

"The tameness of the birds on the islands has been frequently noticed; it is certainly very remarkable, especially in Charles and Chatham Islands, which have been so long inhabited; the small birds of all kinds are so tame that they are easily knocked down with a switch; some of the men killed numbers of doves in this manner.

"The rocks at Iguana Cove were thickly covered with the hideous black Iguanas mentioned by Admiral Fitzroy. We found them in numbers at the other places we visited, but nowhere else so numerous or so large in size. Here they were found to weigh from 20 to 22 lb., against 12 to 14 lb. from other localities."

Mr. Frederick Selous, Jr., exhibited a series of horns of African Rhinoceroses in illustration of Mr. Drummond's paper read at the last Meeting of the Society.

These horns had been obtained in various localities in eastern Africa, and consisted of the following specimens:—

1. *R. bicornis major* ♂. Shot at Tamasanka, Nov. 19, 1874, about lat. 19° 50′ S., long 26° 10′ E.

2. *R. bicornis major* ♀. Shot near the river Gwai, September 1873, about lat. 18° 50′ S., long. 27° E.

3. *R. keitloa* ♂. Shot on the southern edge of the marshes of the Chebe river, August 28, 1874, about lat. 18° 30′ S., long. 4° 50′ E.

4. *R. simus* ♀. Shot on the border of the hills between the Gwai and Zambesi rivers, May 1874, about lat. 18° 40′ S., long. 26° 30′ E.

5. *R. simus* ♀. Shot Oct. 1872, near the river Sech Wechive, north-east of the Matabili country, about lat. 18° 30′ S., long. 29° 50′ E.

6. *R. simus* ♀. Shot Nov. 15, 1874, about lat. 19° S., long. 26° E.

Mr. Sclater read the following extract from a letter addressed to him by Mr. Albert L. C. Le Sœuf, Hon. Secretary of the Zoological and Acclimatization Society of Melbourne, Australia:—

"I send you the horn of a Deer we have in our gardens, and I shall be much obliged if you can let me know what variety it is. I cannot find it described anywhere, although I do not doubt it will be familiar to you. The Deer were sent here some years ago by Sir Henry Barkly, from the Mauritius. In appearance it is like the Sambur Deer, but smaller, say about three feet high or rather

under. The colour of the hair is rather lighter than in the Sambur; the ears are not so large. The does breed freely every year with us. We have liberated some in the bush, and given others away."

Mr. Sclater exhibited the horn in question, and said that it appeared to belong to *Cervus rusa*, originally of Java, but which was known to have been introduced thence into the Mauritius many years ago (see Blyth, Ibis 1862, p. 92).

Mr. Sclater thought it desirable that the facts of this transportation should be placed upon record, as this Deer might probably become a denizen of Australia, as had been already the case in Mauritius.

The following papers were read:—

1. On the Position of the Anterior Nasal Apertures in *Lepidosiren*. By T. H. Huxley, Sec. R.S.

[Received January 7, 1876.]

In the course of the discussion which followed my paper on *Ceratodus*, read before the Society on the 4th of January, reference was made to the position of the anterior nasal apertures in *Lepidosiren*; and they were affirmed to be within the mouth, inasmuch as they are situated between the upper and the lower lips.

The anterior nasal apertures correspond with the primitive openings of the olfactory sacs, which, in all known Vertebrata, are invariably developed from the integument of the under aspect of the head, in front of the region which forms the roof of the oral cavity: and, in all the vertebrated animals in which I had specially studied the question, I had found the anterior nasal apertures to be situated in front of the upper lip and therefore outside the mouth. That they should be situated behind, or below, the upper lip, and therefore inside the mouth (so far as the cavity included between the lips may be properly called the mouth), appeared to me to be a singular anomaly, the existence of which, however, I was not prepared to dispute without reexamination of the facts. The point is, in various respects, of so much interest that I have lost no time in making the requisite investigation, with the result of leaving no doubt whatever in my mind that in *Lepidosiren*, as in *Ceratodus*, the anterior nasal apertures are truly outside the mouth, not only in the sense of lying beyond the contour of the mandible, when this is shut against the palate, but in the sense of being situated on the underside of the head in front of the upper lip, and therefore altogether beyond the limits of any permissible definition of the oral cavity.

When the mouth of a *Lepidosiren* (*L. annectens*) is laid open from below, and the palate and the contour of what has hitherto been termed the upper lip (Fig. p. 181, *c a b d*) are displayed, the latter is seen to present a median portion (*a b*) separated by a slight undulation from the two lateral prolongations *c a* and *b d*. The